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LEAVES FROM NATURE'S "YELLOW BOOK"

BY LENNIE GREENLEE

Illustrated from photographs of natural flowers by Pitcher and Manda.

As Nature again gradually rallies her forces, a slow spring brightens the world like the dawn of a new creation. The first pale flowers that peer out into a world still cold we greet with an enthusiasm much warmer than any given to the tropic-tinted petals of summer. The beauty of spring in the fields and woods is not of the obtrusive kind that flares in our autumnal landscapes, as a discouraging repetition on a limitless scale of effects we are trying to produce in our shrubberies and borders.

It has been said that in autumn it is hard to keep up a sustained enthusiasm in a small enclosure, when all the color combinations attempted are displayed so much more gloriously without. "Our beds of yellow flowers look dull when acres of golden-rod stretch away beyond them; our clumps of blue and purple are insignificant when compared with the stretches of asters by every roadside; and a forest of flame is in



THE MOONFLOWER (HIBISCUS)

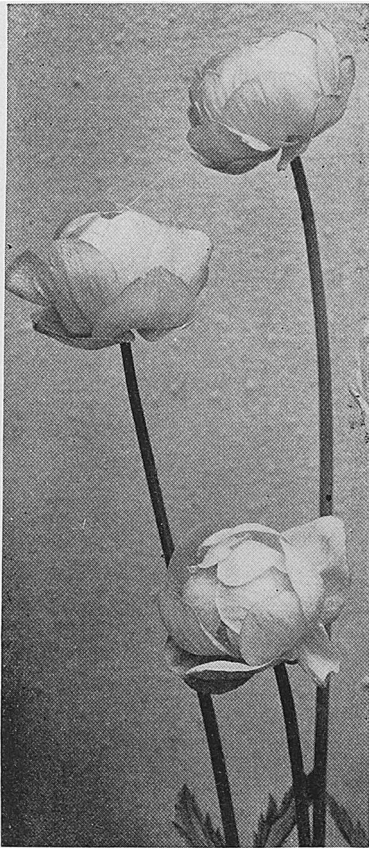


A CHINESE CRAB (PYRUS SPECTABILIS)

sight to dim the foliage of our spireas and coleus."

Out-door effects in spring are daintier and more delicate, not less beautiful. They have no suggestion of trying to kill with endless glamour our feeble best-laid plans inside the garden-wall. We see nothing in nature brighter than the gay flame of our tulip-beds; few things daintier and sweeter than the hyacinths, snowdrops, and lilies of the valley along our garden-walks.

The rosy drifts of wild crab-apple blossoms that fleck the early woods, guiding to the thickets where they grow

THE GLOBE-FLOWER (*TROLLIUS ARANEUS*)

fresh and fragrant for many days, and are lovely ornaments for table and mantel.

As the days lengthen and the sunshine grows warmer, it is interesting to note how flowers increase in size and deepen in tint. Yellow seems the favorite color. From early crocuses, daffodils, dandelions, and buttercups to plumes of golden-rod silvered by autumn frosts, the sunshine color is recklessly spent. What

truer guide can we have for our cultivated flowers? "Yellow is becoming more and more dominant in decoration—in wall-papers and flowers cultivated with decorative intention, such as chrysanthemums; and one can easily understand why, seeing that, after white, yellow reflects more light than any other color, and thus ministers to the growing preference for light and joyous rooms. A few yellow chrysanthemums will make a small room look twice its size, and when the sun comes out

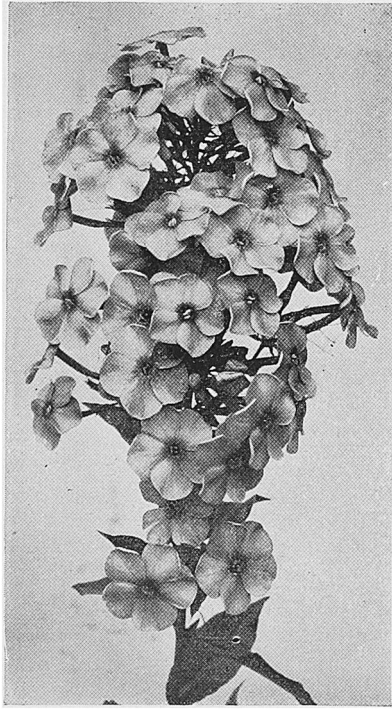
by their subtle pervading fragrance, are but pale cousins of the cultivated pyrus, one of the prettiest forms of which is given in the picture. Early in May this Chinese flowering-crab opens its clusters of chubby buds in rich clouds, spilling an incomparable fragrance through the air.

This whole family of hardy shapely little crab trees is distractingly pretty. The flowers have long stems with a graceful droop, and may be as double as little roses, semi-double, or single. Their color is sometimes very bright, as in Parkman's variety, toning down in other sorts through rose and pale pink to pure white. The garland flowering-crab has single white flowers, just touched with a faint glow of pink, and scented with the odor of violets. When loosely and naturally arranged in bowls or vases, the flowers keep



HEMEROCALLIS THUNBERGI

upon yellow wall-paper the whole room seems suddenly to expand and open. When it falls upon a pot of yellow chrysanthemums and sets them ablaze, it seems like the presence of an angel in the room."



A PHLOX

Soon after the spring prologue in gold, the yellow heads of the Trollius, or globe-flower, begin to shine out along our walks. This neat dwarf little plant deserves especial mention as one of our best hardy perennials. It grows impartially in different soils and situations, and its flowers are capable of almost as bright effects in dark parlors as are those of the yellow chrysanthemum.

Clumps of hemerocallis, growing among the grass, lift clusters of lily-like flowers in the same glittering color. The eight or more varieties show almost every shade it is capable of, from soft lemon tints



SUNFLOWERS



SUNFLOWERS (HELIANTHUS MAXIMILIANI)

to tawny orange and cadmium. By some one of these the family is represented from early spring until the handsome bright yellow flowers of *Hemerocallis Thunbergi* burn themselves out in midsummer.

By this time the wild and cultivated forms of *Helianthus*, or sunflower, have claimed a long chapter in nature's "Yellow Book." These form a very important group of bold, showy, autumn-flowering

plants, indispensable for wide borders, woodland walks, etc., especially where cut flowers are wanted in quantity. *Helianthus maximus* has the largest and brightest flowers; *Helianthus orgyalis* has long, willow-like leaves and blooms latest; *Helianthus Maximiliani* is perhaps the most graceful of all, and the favorite for cutting.

We have tints and touches of yellow here and there in the grand flower-panicles of the great family of peren-



THE BEE-BALM (*MONARDA DIDYMA*)



A VARIEGATED OLEANDER



A CALCEOLARIA



A CENERARIA

nial phloxes, also in the dwarf Drummond varieties, but yellow will never claim them distinctively for its own, even with the most expert hybridizing.

Flowers without fragrance are, in a sense, soulless, yet plant-magicians can, in many cases, impart it, like other traits of a flower, by hybridizing. Take, for instance, the peony. This buxom, rather coarse beauty of old-time gardens, we now have in re-

finer types, with glossy-petaled flowers as regularly formed, cupped and finished, as a rose, often with a distinct and pleasing fragrance. The decorative scope of this flower is very wide and full of possibilities. Nothing else is so well adapted for large and showy bouquets and vases, and when large beds of it are planted upon a wide lawn, as suggested in the accompanying illustration, the grand display of bloom almost shames the plots of rhododendrons.

The place and time of its blooming are usually well adjusted to enhance the beauty of a flower. What an audacious thing is a great satiny moon-flower in the sunlight! Yet at night, under moonbeams, and among cool green shadows, it is so beautiful as to inspire many extravaganzas in poetry and pictures. We love white lilies best in flickering light and shadow, or in the cool hush of the evening.



THE STANDARD ROSE PRIMULA



A FIELD OF PEONIES